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AN ENTERTAINING COMIC EC

NO. 32
OCT.-NOV.

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TALES FROM THE CRYPT ®

AN ENTERTAINING COMIC EC

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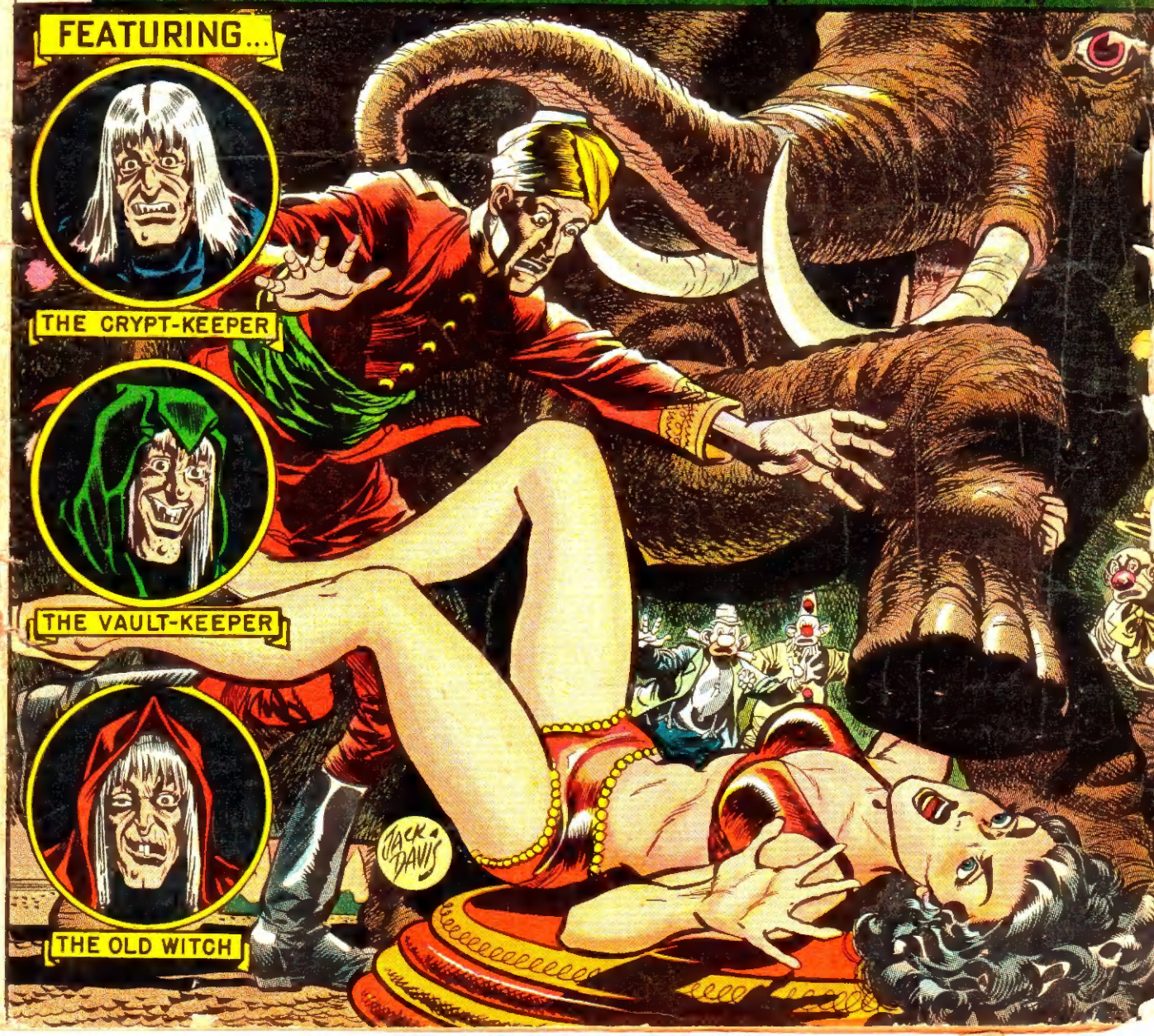

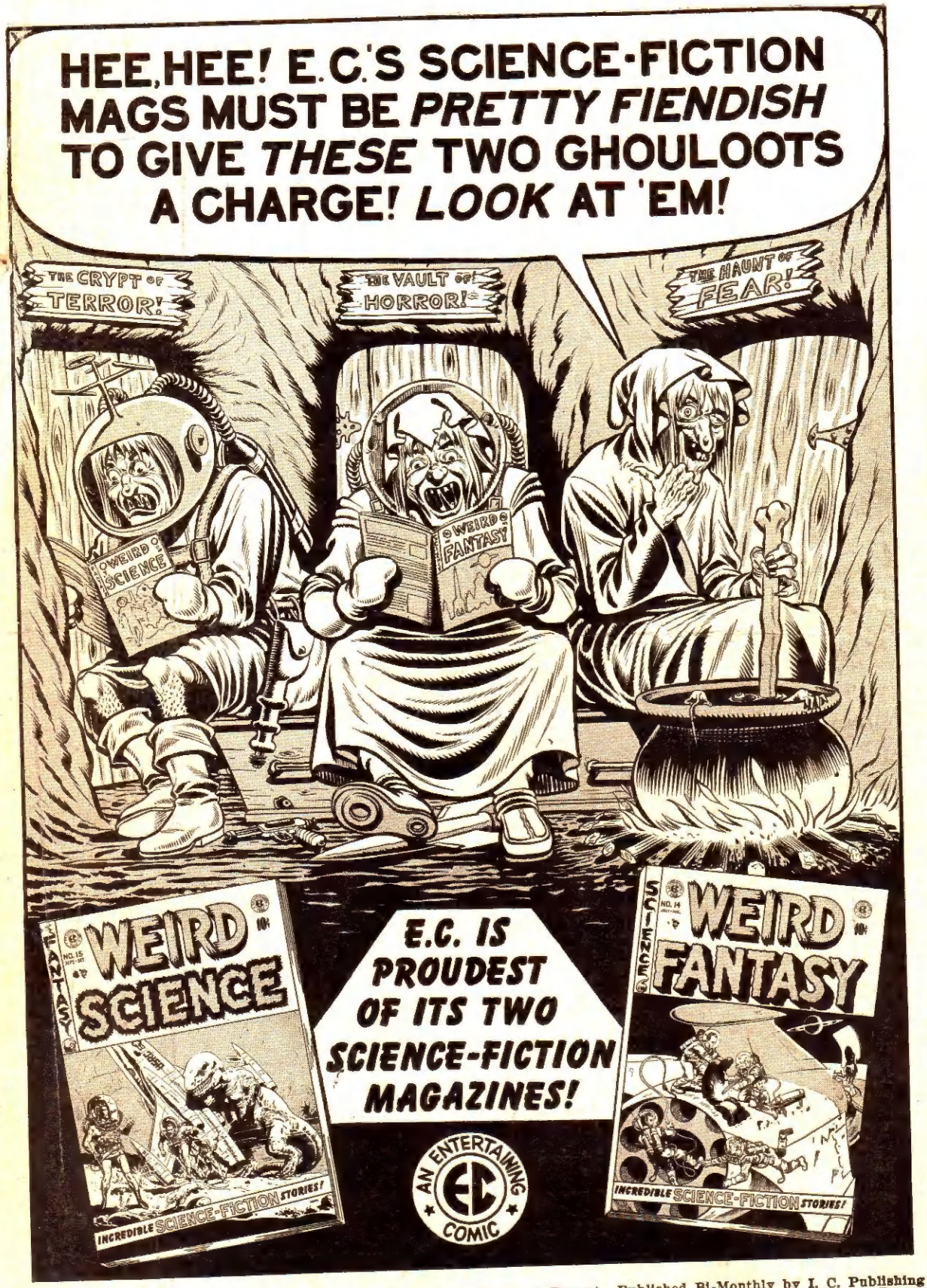

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Ontology

THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! COME *IN*, FIENDS! COME INTO THE *CRYPT OF TERROR!* ONCE AGAIN WE MEET FOR OUR *SHIVERY SESSION!* YES, IT'S YOUR *HOST IN HORROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER*, OPENING HIS *MAD-MAG* WITH A *TERRIFYING TALE GUARANTEED* TO *CURL YOUR HAIR* AND *CURDLE YOUR BLOOD!* SEVERAL ISSUES BACK, I TOLD YOU A YARN ABOUT A *BUTCHER* WHICH PROVED VERY *POPULAR!* *ONE* AVID FAN EVEN SENT ME A *CLEAVER*, WITH *COMPLETE DIRECTIONS* FOR WHAT HE WANTED ME TO *DO WITH* IT... BUT *IT DIDN'T SINK IN!* SO I DECIDED TO TELL YOU *ANOTHER* STORY ABOUT A *BUTCHER*... ONE THAT I'M SURE WILL *TICKLE YOUR SPARE-RIBS!* I *CALL* THIS *MEATY LITTLE MORBID MELODRAMA*...

AS THE *NAUSEOUS CANNIBAL* REMARKED ON A *PARTICULARLY HOT* DAY...

NO ONE PAID MUCH *ATTENTION* TO ZACH GRISTLE BEFORE *WORLD WAR II!* HE WAS JUST *ANOTHER SMALL TOWN BUTCHER!* BUT THAT WAS *BEFORE* THE WAR! SUDDENLY... WITH THE ADVENT OF *MEAT RATIONING*... *RED POINTS*... AND *CEILING PRICES*... ZACH GRISTLE BECAME *VERY POPULAR*...

HEH, HEH! YEP! SUDDENLY, OL' ZACH GRISTLE FOUND HIMSELF THE MOST POPULAR MAN IN TOWN! HEH, HEH! WHY NOT? HE WAS THE ONLY BUTCHER! REMEMBER THOSE DAYS, KIDDIES? RATION BOOKS! SO MANY RED POINTS FOR EACH POUND OF MEAT! SO MANY RED POINTS ALLOWED EACH PERSON PER MONTH! IT WAS PRETTY TOUGH... THE SITUATION, THAT IS...
OH, DEAR! I ONLY HAVE FORTY-ONE POINTS LEFT, MR. GRISTLE! CAN I...OWE THEM TO YOU?
I'M AWFULLY SORRY, MRS. VINKLE! I NEED THOSE POINTS IN ORDER TO BUY THE MEAT MYSELF! I COULDN'T DO THAT!
NO SIRLOIN STEAKS, MR. GRISTLE?
SORRY, MR. FUDDY! I JUST SOLD THE LAST ONE TO MR. CUSPITORE! I COULD LET YOU HAVE A FEW PORK CHOPS!
SORRY, MISS DICKLEBORG! NOTHING BUT SALAMI LEFT! I EXPECT ANOTHER SHIPMENT TOMORROW! BUT YOU'D BETTER BE ON LINE EARLY! FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED, YOU KNOW!
POOR MR. GRISTLE! HE TRIES SO HARD! AND HE'S SO HONEST!
THIS RATIONING CERTAINLY IS HARD ON HIM!
O.P.A.
YEP! MEAT RATIONING WAS HARD ON MR. GRISTLE! THAT IS, UNTIL HE DISCOVERED AN INTERESTING FACT...
IF I COULD GET A NICE STEAK, MR. GRISTLE, I'D...ER...PAY! WE'D... SORT OF...FORGET ABOUT THE CEILING PRICE!
BUT...THAT'S DISHONEST, MR. VANDERCLIFF! THAT'S BLACK MARKET!
NO TELLING HOW LONG THIS WAR WILL LAST, ZACH! MIGHT AS WELL MAKE HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES! THERE ARE A FEW OF US WHO'D BE WILLING TO PAY ENOUGH TO GET WHAT WE WANT!
BUT WHAT ABOUT THE...THE POOR PEOPLE, MR. VANDERCLIFF?
SUIT YOURSELF, ZACH! YOU'RE ONE OF THEM, NOW! YOU COULD BE PRETTY WELL OFF IF YOU USED YOUR HEAD! THINK IT OVER!
I...I WILL, SIR! I'LL...THINK IT OVER!
2

ONE THOUSAND! TWO THOUSAND! OH... PARDON ME! I WAS JUST COUNTING MY LOOT FROM THE BLACK MARKET OPERATION I WAS IN DURING THE WAR! HEH, HEH! THERE WAS A SHORTAGE OF CASKETS, Y'KNOW! I DUG UP AN IDEA ON HOW TO CASH IN! ALL I HAD TO DO WAS CLEAN OFF THE DIRT AND POLISH 'EM UP AGAIN! HEH, HEH! AS FOR MR. GRISTLE... WELL... LET'S LOOK IN ON HIS HOME LIFE!

JUNIOR! EAT YOUR MEAT!
I'M NOT HUNGRY!
SEVENTEEN POINTS!

YOU SAY SOMETHING, ZACH?
HUH? OH! NO! I WAS JUST THINKING, DEAR!

YEP! MR. GRISTLE THOUGHT IT ALL OVER! AND HE MADE UP HIS MIND...
WHY, MR. GRISTLE! THERE ISN'T A DECENT PIECE OF MEAT IN YOUR WHOLE SHOWCASE!
THAT'S ALL I'VE GOT, MRS. GRUNDY! SHORTAGE, Y'KNOW!

BUT I WAITED ON LINE FOR TWO HOURS! I'M THE FIRST CUSTOMER YOU'VE HAD TODAY!
THAT'S ALL I'VE GOT, MRS. GRUNDY! I'M SORRY!

BUT AT NIGHT, SHADOWY FIGURES WOULD COME TO MR. GRISTLE'S STORE...
HERE'S YOUR STEAK, MR. VANDERCLIFF! TEN POUNDS!
AND HERE'S YOUR THIRTY BUCKS, MR. GRISTLE! OH! I'VE GOT ANOTHER CUSTOMER FOR YOU! HE WANTS STEAKS, TOO!

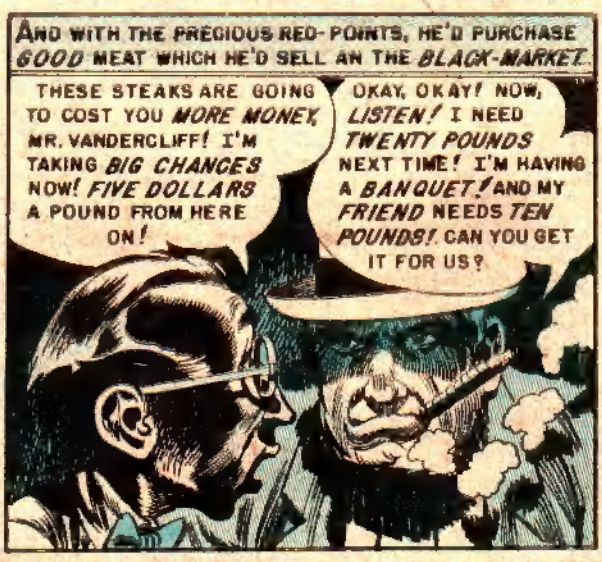
BUT I CAN'T GET ANYMORE, MR. VANDERCLIFF! I DON'T GET ENOUGH POINTS! AS IT IS, I'M GIVING THE LEFT-OVERS TO THE FOLKS IN TOWN!
YOU COULD FIGURE SOMETHING OUT, MR. GRISTLE! THE FOLKS IN TOWN PAY POINTS FOR THEIR MEAT! ISN'T THER ANY MEAT THAT YOU CAN GET WITHOUT RED POINTS?

...AND AT THE THREE-QUARTER MARKER, IT'S FATHEAD, BY A FAT HEAD! AND NOW... AT THE STRETCH... IT'S... IT'S... HOLD IT! FATHEAD JUST STUMBLED! LOOKS LIKE HE BUSTED HIS LEG! TOO BAD! NOW THEY'LL HAVE TO SHOOT HIM! AND HE WAS SUCH A GOOD HORSE, TOO! ER... MR. GRISTLE? YOU LISTENING?
WESM

JUNIOR! EAT YOUR MEAT!
I'M NOT HUNGRY! GEE! YUH 'SPECT ME TO EAT LIKE A HORSE!
HORSE-MEAT!

YOU SAY SOMETHING, ZACH?
HUH? OH! NO! I WAS JUST THINKING, DEAR!

YEP! MR. GRISTLE FOUND THE SOLUTION TO HIS PROBLEMS! HE BEGAN BUYING HORSEMEAT, AND PALMING IT OFF TO HIS POOR CUSTOMERS AS THE REAL THING... THEREBY GETTING THOSE PRECIOUS RED-POINTS...
MY! YOU HAVE SUCH A NICE SELECTION NOW, MR. GRISTLE!
YES! WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE, MRS. SNERD? SOME STEAK? CHOPS?


AND WITH THE PRECIOUS RED-POINTS, HE'D PURCHASE GOOD MEAT WHICH HE'D SELL ON THE BLACK-MARKET.
THESE STEAKS ARE GOING TO COST YOU MORE MONEY, MR. VANDERCLIFF! I'M TAKING BIG CHANCES NOW! FIVE DOLLARS A POUND FROM HERE ON!
OKAY, OKAY! NOW, LISTEN! I NEED TWENTY POUNDS NEXT TIME! I'M HAVING A BANQUET! AND MY FRIEND NEEDS TEN POUNDS! CAN YOU GET IT FOR US?

SOON, THE HORSEMEAT WASN'T ENOUGH! MR. GRISTLE HAD TO FIND OTHER AVENUES OF SUPPLY...
LOOK, GRISTLE! I'M SUPPOSED TO SELL THIS MEAT TO ZOOS! IT'S TOO OLD FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION! BEEN LAYING AROUND THE WAREHOUSE TOO LONG! NOW... FOR A PRICE...
...AND NO POINTS?

NO POINTS, GRISTLE!
I'LL TAKE IT! BUT, NOT A WORD, UNDERSTAND? NOT A WORD TO ANYONE!

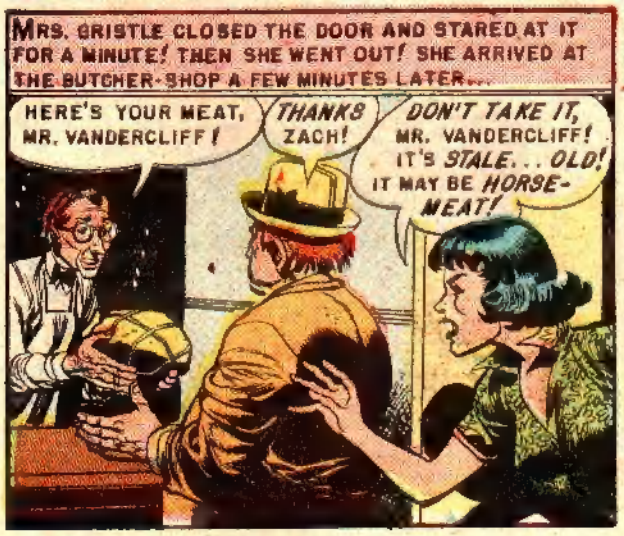
HEH, HEH! FIRST HORSEMEAT... NOW STALE MEAT! MR. GRISTLE CERTAINLY WAS SINKING LOWER AND LOWER! BUT NO ONE SUSPECTED NICE MR. GRISTLE WHEN A FEW PEOPLE... THE POORER PEOPLE IN TOWN... FELL SERIOUSLY ILL!

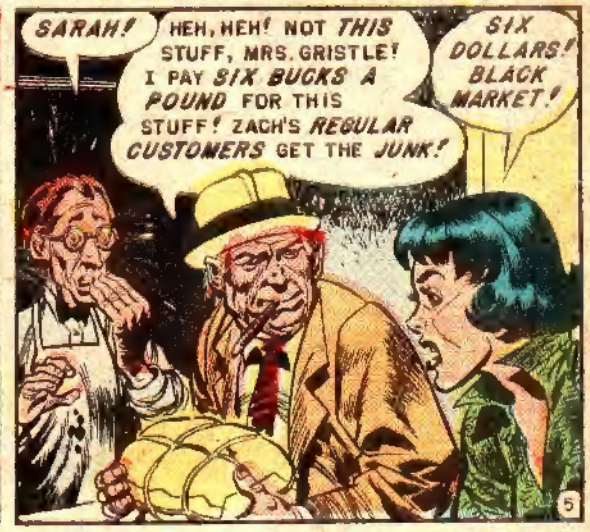
HOW'S YOUR HUSBAND TODAY, MRS. HORTON?
BETTER, THANKS! NOW, I AIN'T BEEN FEELIN' TOO GOOD!

BUT ONE NIGHT...
MR. GRISTLE ISN'T IN! HE'S OUT WALKING!
WELL JUST TELL 'IM HE CAN PICK UP ANOTHER LOAD OF THE SLOP!

THE... THE WHAT?
THE STALE MEAT! THE JUNK! THE STUFF HE'S BEEN SELLIN' AS GOOD STUFF! YOU KNOW!

OH! Y-YES! I'LL... I'LL TELL HIM!
TELL 'IM I GOT SOME HORSEMEAT FOR 'IM, TOO! 'BYE!


MRS. GRISTLE CLOSED THE DOOR AND STARED AT IT FOR A MINUTE! THEN SHE WENT OUT! SHE ARRIVED AT THE BUTCHER-SHOP A FEW MINUTES LATER...
HERE'S YOUR MEAT, MR. VANDERCLIFF!
THANKS ZACH!
DON'T TAKE IT, MR. VANDERCLIFF! IT'S STALE... OLD! IT MAY BE HORSE-MEAT!


SARAH!
HEH, HEH! NOT THIS STUFF, MRS. GRISTLE! I PAY SIX BUCKS A POUND FOR THIS STUFF! ZACH'S REGULAR CUSTOMERS GET THE JUNK!
SIX DOLLARS! BLACK MARKET!

BRIGHT KID, THIS SARAH! QUICK WITH NUMBERS! CEILING PRICE... 69¢! SIX DOLLARS TO VANDERCLIFF! BLACK MARKET! IT FIGURES! BUT SHE'S A GOOD KID, MRS. GRISTLE! SHE'S REAL MAD...

AFTER ZACH'S CUSTOMER LEAVES...
YOU'RE SELLING MEAT ON THE BLACK MARKET!
YOU KEEP OUT OF THIS, SARAH!

AND YOU'RE PASSING OFF HORSEMEAT AND STALE MEAT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS FOR RED-POINTS!
WE'RE GOING TO BE RICH, SARAH!

I DON'T WANT THAT KIND OF MONEY! MR. HORTON WAS TERRIBLY SICK! WAS IT FROM YOUR MEAT?
PROBABLY! WHO CARES? ANYWAY, I WANT THE MONEY! AFTER THE WAR I'M GOING TO RETIRE! I'VE SOCKED AWAY SIX GRAND ALREADY!

YOU'VE GOT TO STOP THIS! IT'S AGAINST THE LAW!
HAH! ASK OLD SNORKMAN ABOUT HIS GASOLINE BUSINESS! FIND OUT ABOUT FINCH'S TIRE RACKET! EVERYBODY'S DOIN' IT! WHY SHOULDN'T I?

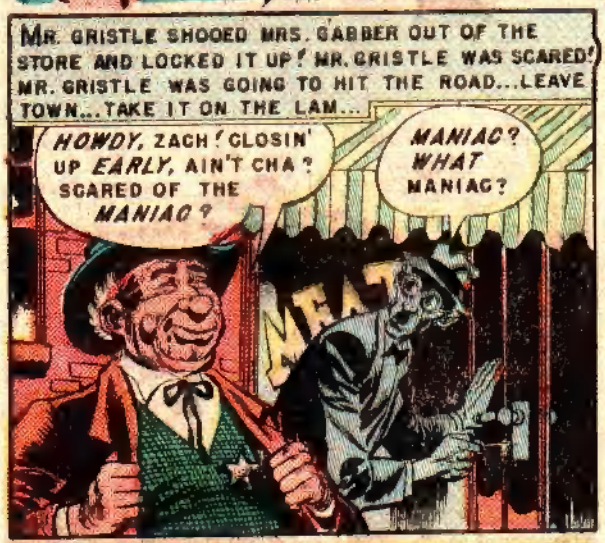
YEP! MRS. GRISTLE WAS AWFUL MAD... BUT SHE COULDN'T TALK ZACH OUT OF IT! HE WAS DETERMINED TO MAKE HIS PILE... NO MATTER WHO SUFFERED...
GOT A DEAL FOR YOU, GRISTLE! GOT SOME TAINTED MEAT! REAL BAD! NO ONE'LL KNOW IT, THOUGH! GOT A PROCESS THAT COVERS IT UP! THEY WON'T FIND OUT TILL IT'S INSIDE 'EM! THEY'LL FEEL PRETTY SAD!
I NEED SOME POINTS BADLY! GOT A BIG ORDER TO FILL! OKAY! I'LL TAKE IT!

SO ZACH GRISTLE BOUGHT THE SPOILED MEAT AND SOLD IT TO HIS CUSTOMERS...
MY SISTER-IN-LAW IS HERE FROM OUT OF TOWN! SHE'S AMAZED THAT WE CAN GET ALL THE MEAT WE WANT!
HEH! JUST TRY TO DO MY BEST, MRS. ABACROMBIE! WHAT'LL IT BE?

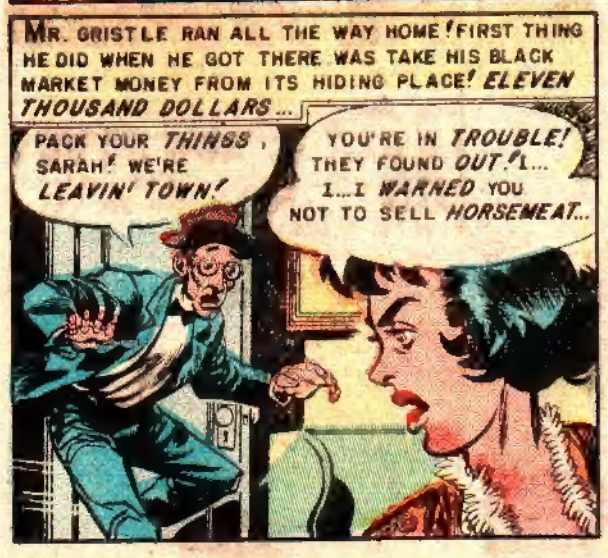
HEH,HEH! DON'T TURN OVER THE PAGE TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS! YOU'LL GET TO IT! IT'S COMING! THE BEGINNING OF THE END COMMENCES TO START RIGHT NOW! ER... FLOWERS FOR MRS. ABACROMBIE! WHAT KIND? WHY LILLIES... OF COURSE! DEAD, Y'KNOW!

DID YOU HEAR? MRS. ABACROMBIE JUST DIED! POISONED! THEY THINK HER SISTER-IN-LAW DID IT!
POISONED?

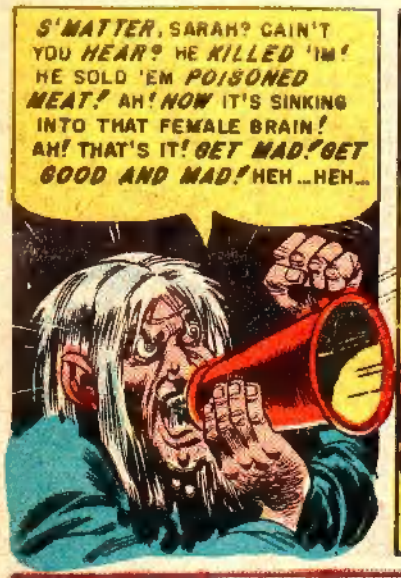
THEY'RE PERFORMING AN AUTOPSY RIGHT NOW!
EXCUSE ME, MRS. GABBER! IF THAT'S ALL YOU WANT... I'D LIKE TO CLOSE UP!


MR. GRISTLE SHOOED MRS. GABBER OUT OF THE STORE AND LOCKED IT UP! MR. GRISTLE WAS SCARED! MR. GRISTLE WAS GOING TO HIT THE ROAD... LEAVE TOWN... TAKE IT ON THE LAM...
HOWDY, ZACH! CLOSIN' UP EARLY, AIN'T CHA? SCARED OF THE MANIAC?
MANIAC? WHAT MANIAC?
MEAT

WHY, THE ONE'S GOIN' AROUND POISONIN' EVERYONE! MRS. ABACROMBIE... AND MRS. SNERD... AND MR. SNERD... AND OL' MAN GRUNDY! ALL DEAD! WATCH YERSELF GOIN' HOME, ZACH!
Y-YES! WELL! GOODNIGHT, PETE!

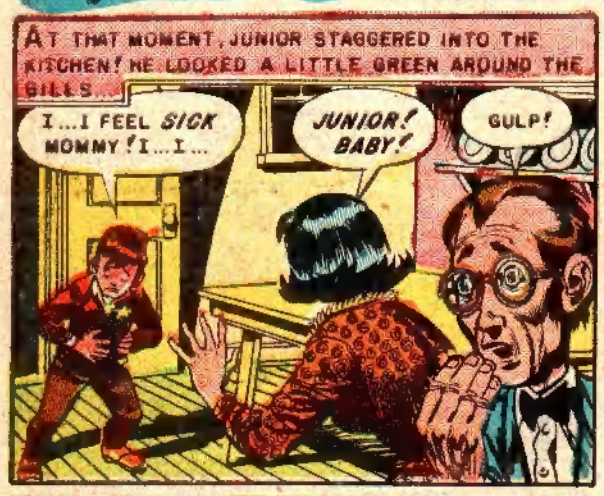

MR. GRISTLE RAN ALL THE WAY HOME! FIRST THING HE DID WHEN HE GOT THERE WAS TAKE HIS BLACK MARKET MONEY FROM ITS HIDING PLACE! ELEVEN THOUSAND DOLLARS...
PACK YOUR THINGS, SARAH! WE'RE LEAVIN' TOWN!
YOU'RE IN TROUBLE! THEY FOUND OUT! I... I...I WARNED YOU NOT TO SELL HORSEMEAT...

IT'S WORSE THAN THAT, SARAH! FOUR PEOPLE ARE DEAD ALREADY! I SOLD THEM TAINTED MEAT!
YOU... YOU WHAT?

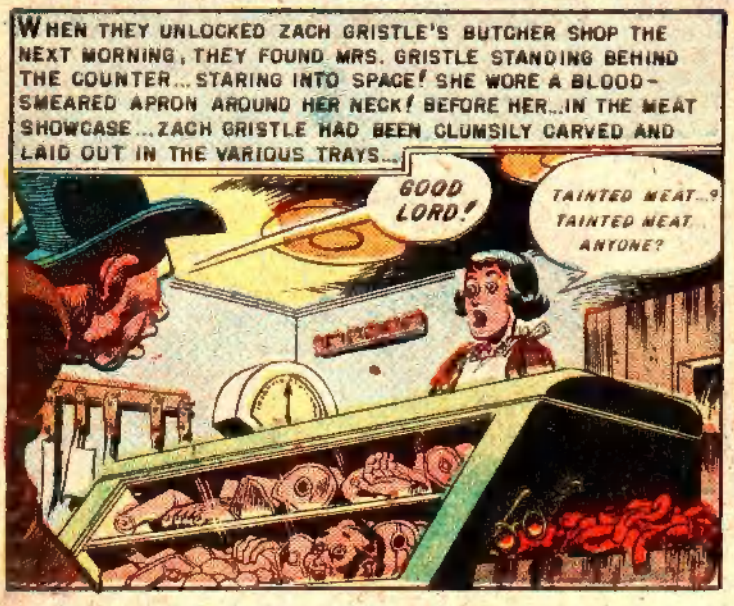

S'MATTER, SARAH? CAIN'T YOU HEAR? HE KILLED 'IM! HE SOLD 'EM POISONED MEAT! AH! NOW IT'S SINKING INTO THAT FEMALE BRAIN! AH! THAT'S IT! GET MAD! GET GOOD AND MAD! HEH...HEH...

YOU'RE A MURDERER!
I DID IT FOR US, SARAH! FOR YOU AND ME AND... JUNIOR!

JUNIOR! HE'S EATING AT HERBIE HORTON'S HOUSE!
HORTON! SHE BOUGHT SOME OF IT!


AT THAT MOMENT, JUNIOR STAGGERED INTO THE KITCHEN! HE LOOKED A LITTLE GREEN AROUND THE GILLS...
I...I FEEL SICK MOMMY! I...I...
JUNIOR! BABY!
GULP!

LITTLE JUNIOR COLLAPSED ON THE KITCHEN FLOOR.
HE'S DEAD, ZACH! DEAD! YOU KILLED HIM, TOO... OUR SON... EH...EH... OUR SON...
SARAH! PUT DOWN THAT KNIFE!

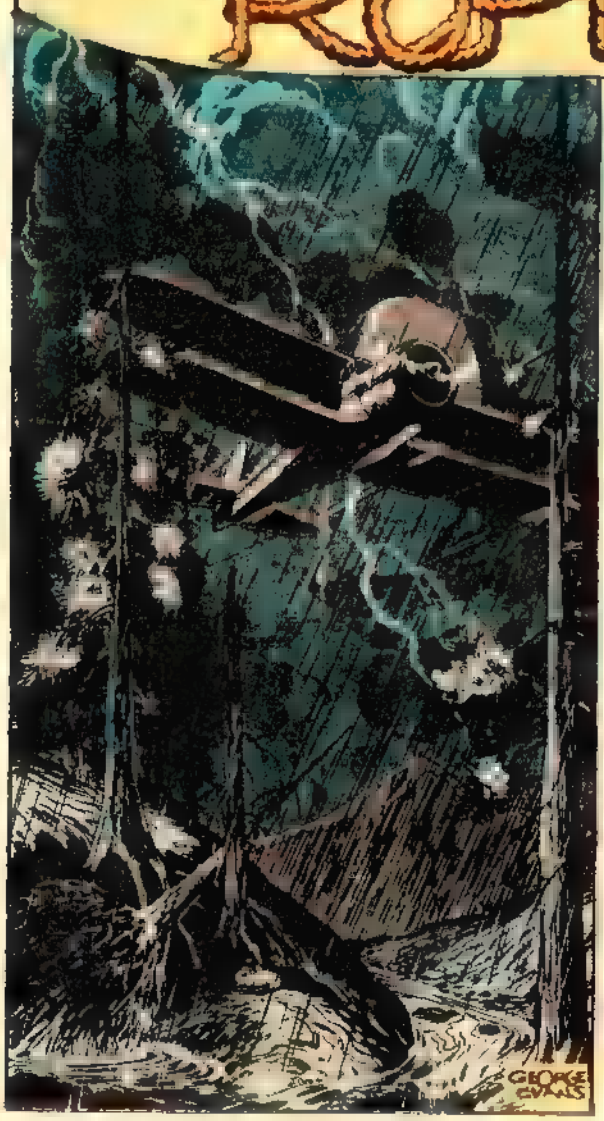

WHEN THEY UNLOCKED ZACH GRISTLE'S BUTCHER SHOP THE NEXT MORNING, THEY FOUND MRS. GRISTLE STANDING BEHIND THE COUNTER...STARING INTO SPACE! SHE WORE A BLOOD-SMEARED APRON AROUND HER NECK! BEFORE HER...IN THE MEAT SHOWCASE...ZACH GRISTLE HAD BEEN CLUMSILY CARVED AND LAID OUT IN THE VARIOUS TRAYS...
GOOD LORD!
TAINTED MEAT...? TAINTED MEAT... ANYONE?

ALL RIGHT, SO YOU AIN'T HUNGRY! YOU CAN WINDOW SHOP, CAN'T YOU? NOT INTERESTED, EH? MAYBE YOU'D BE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING A FORMAL BANQUET GIVEN BY THE GHOULS, ZOMBIES, WEREWOLVES, AND VAMPIRES BLACK-MARKET-BODIES SYNDICATE IN HONOR OF ZACH GRISTLE? HE WILL BE SERVED! HMMM! STILL NOT INTERESTED, EH? HOW ABOUT GOING ON TO THE VAULT-KEEPER THEN? HE'S NOT INTERESTING, TOO! GOT A BORING STORY FOR YOU! THEN I'LL DIG YOU LATER WITH ANOTHER CREEPY-CRYPT-COLLECTOR'S-ITEM!

THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! WELCOME TO *THE VAULT OF HORROR, FIENDS!* YEP, IT'S YOUR *HOST, THE VAULT-KEEPER, SHRIEKING!* EVER HEAR OF *MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS?* SURE YOU HAVE! WELL, I'LL BET YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF *MOUNTAIN CRAWLERS...SOUTH AMERICAN VARIETY!* MY STORY *CONCERNS* ONE! I *CALL* THIS *BRISTLING TALE OF TERROR...*

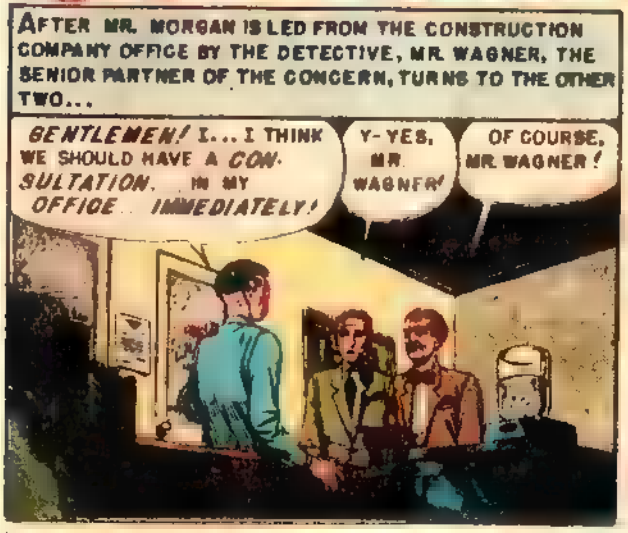
ROPED IN!

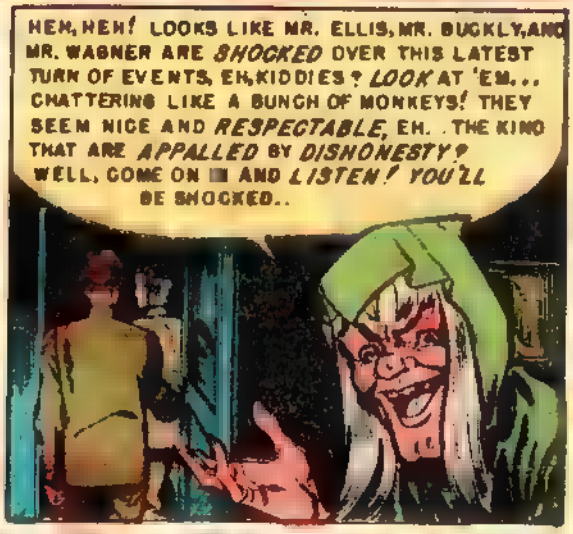


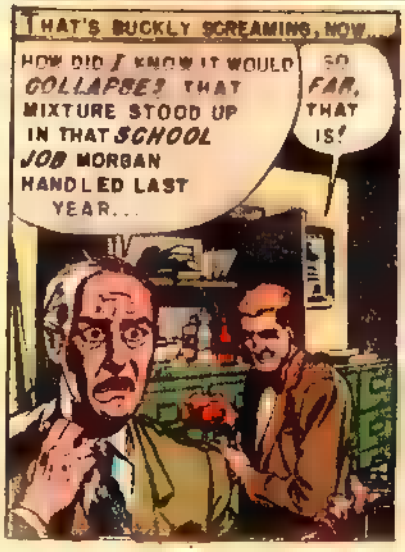
THE SECRETARY LOOKS DOWN AT THE STRANGER'S GLITTERING BADGE AND GASPS! SHE SWITCHES ON THE OFFICE INTER-COM AND WHISPERS...
MR. MORGAN! THERE'S A...A GENTLEMAN OUT HERE... TO SEE YOU!
HAVE HIM WAIT, MISS BALLENTINE! I'M BUSY...
HE...HE'S FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, SIR!
OH? ALL RIGHT! I'LL BE RIGHT OUT!
DONALD MORGAN COMES OUT OF HIS OFFICE...
YES? WHAT IS IT?
MR. MORGAN, YOU WERE IN COMPLETE CHARGE OF THE CONTRACT FOR THE CITY HOSPITAL, WERE YOU NOT?
I WAS! I HANDLED THE ENTIRE CONSTRUCTION JOB MYSELF! WHY?
MR. MORGAN! YOU ARE UNDER ARREST!
WHAT? BUT... BUT THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE!
THERE'S NO MISTAKE, MR. MORGAN! THE UPPER FLOOR OF THE HOSPITAL COLLAPSED THIS MORNING! AN INVESTIGATION SHOWED THAT THE CONCRETE USED WAS SUBSTANDARD! ALMOST ALL SAND! BETTER COME ALONG QUIETLY!
BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I ORDERED THAT CONCRETE MYSELF! I SPECIFIED THE MIXTURE! IT WAS A GOOD MIXTURE! NO! LET ME GO! I WON'T...
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?
WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?
MORGAN! WHAT DOES HE WANT?
I WANT HIM FOR HOMICIDE, GENTLEMEN! YOUR PARTNER, HERE, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF TWENTY-ONE HOSPITAL PATIENTS!
WHAT? MORGAN! IS THIS TRUE?
NO! NO! THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE!

THE ONLY MISTAKE WAS THE ONE YOUR PARTNER MADE WHEN HE USED TOO LITTLE CONCRETE AND TOO MUCH SAND IN THAT HOSPITAL JOB HE HANDLED!
GOOD LORD!
MORGAN! HOW COULD YOU?
THAT... THAT'S DISHONEST, MORGAN!

ELLIS... WAGNER... BUCKLY! BELIEVE ME! I DIDN'T DO THIS! I... I
BETTER COME ALONG QUIETLY, MR. MORGAN! LET'S GO!
OH, DEAR! THE SCANDAL!
OUR REPUTATION!


AFTER MR. MORGAN IS LED FROM THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY OFFICE BY THE DETECTIVE, MR. WAGNER, THE SENIOR PARTNER OF THE CONCERN, TURNS TO THE OTHER TWO...
GENTLEMEN! I... I THINK WE SHOULD HAVE A CONSULTATION... IN MY OFFICE... IMMEDIATELY!
Y-YES, MR. WAGNER!
OF COURSE, MR. WAGNER!

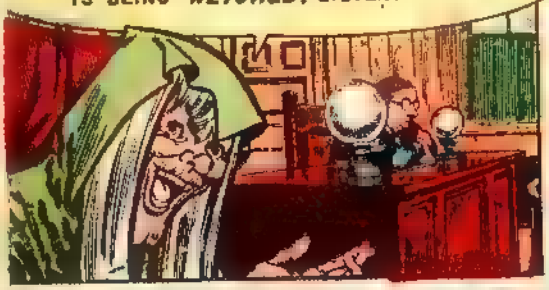

HEH, HEH! LOOKS LIKE MR. ELLIS, MR. BUCKLY, AND MR. WAGNER ARE SHOCKED OVER THIS LATEST TURN OF EVENTS, EH, KIDDIES? LOOK AT 'EM... CHATTERING LIKE A BUNCH OF MONKEYS! THEY SEEM NICE AND RESPECTABLE, EH... THE KIND THAT ARE APPALLED BY DISHONESTY? WELL, COME ON IN AND LISTEN! YOU'LL BE SHOCKED..


THAT'S BUCKLY SCREAMING, NOW...
HOW DID I KNOW IT WOULD COLLAPSE? THAT MIXTURE STOOD UP IN THAT SCHOOL JOB MORGAN HANDLED LAST YEAR...
SO FAR, THAT IS!

WHAT ARE YOU COMPLAINING ABOUT, ELLIS? YOU GOT A NICE FAT CHUNK OF THE DOUGH WE SAVED!
I'M NOT COMPLAINING! ONLY THEY'RE ON TO US NOW!

GO WHAT! WE'VE ONLY SUBSTITUTED CHEAP MATERIALS ON MORGAN'S JOBS! HE'LL TAKE THE RAP! HE'S TRAPPED... TRAPPED IN A WEB OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE!
WE'LL JUST KEEP ACTING SHOCKED AT THIS WHOLE DEAL! THEY'LL NEVER SUSPECT US!

YEP! THAT'S THE PICTURE, KIDDIES! ELLIS, BUCKLY, AND WAGNER HAVE BEEN TAKING THE *HIGH GRADE* CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL ORDERED BY *MORGAN* ON EVERY JOB *HE'S* HANDLED AND *SUBSTITUTING CHEAP, INFERIOR GRADE STUFF!* THEN THEY'VE BEEN POCKETING THE *DIFFERENCE!* POOR *MORGAN* IS *RESPONSIBLE! YES,* THEY'VE SPUN A *NEAT LITTLE WEB OF EVIDENCE* AROUND THE INNOCENT FOURTH PARTNER! NOW THE EVIDENCE IS BEING *WEIGHED!* LISTEN...



GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY! HAVE YOU REACHED A *VERDICT?*

WE *HAVE*, YOUR HONOR! WE *FIND* THE DEFENDENT, DONALD MORGAN, *GUILTY OF MANSLAUGHTER!*

NO! NO!

YES, DONALD! *YES!* THE WEB IS *TIGHT!* IT'S BEEN *WOVEN WELL!* YOU'RE *DONE FOR...*

I'M *INNOCENT*, I TELL YOU... *INNOCENT!*

TAKE HIM AWAY!

AT THE OFFICES OF THE WAGNER, ELLIS, AND BUCKLY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY...

WHY THE SUDDEN *MEETING*, WAGNER?

IT HAS *NOTHING* TO DO WITH *MORGAN*... GENTLEMEN!

DO YOU REMEMBER THAT *BOLIVIAN* CONTRACT WE BID ON? THE *POWER PLANT* AND *DAM?* WELL... WE *GOT* IT!

WHAT? WHY *THAT'S* WORTH A *FORTUNE!*

AND THERE'S ONLY *THREE* OF US TO SPLIT THE PROFIT, *NOW!*

WHEN DO WE *LEAVE*, WAGNER?

TOMORROW! WE'RE *FLYING* DOWN... IN THE *COMPANY'S PRIVATE PLANE!*

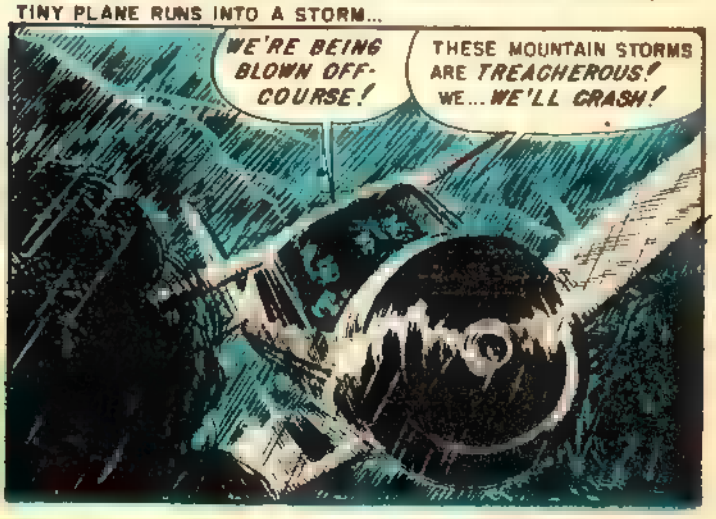
AND SO, THE NEXT DAY, A SMALL FOUR-SEATER TAKES OFF FROM THE AIRPORT JUST OUTSIDE THE CITY... BOUND FOR LA PAZ, CAPITOL OF BOLIVIA...

POOR MORGAN! HE *ALWAYS* LOVED TO *FLY* WITH US! TOO BAD HE HAD TO *MISS* THIS TRIP!

HEH, HEH! YES! TOO BAD!

A WEEK LATER, THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY'S PLANE IS WINGING ITS WAY SOUTH OVER THE ANDES MOUNTAINS...

NORTH OF LAKE TITICACA ON THE PERU-BOLIVIAN BORDER, THE TINY PLANE RUNS INTO A STORM...

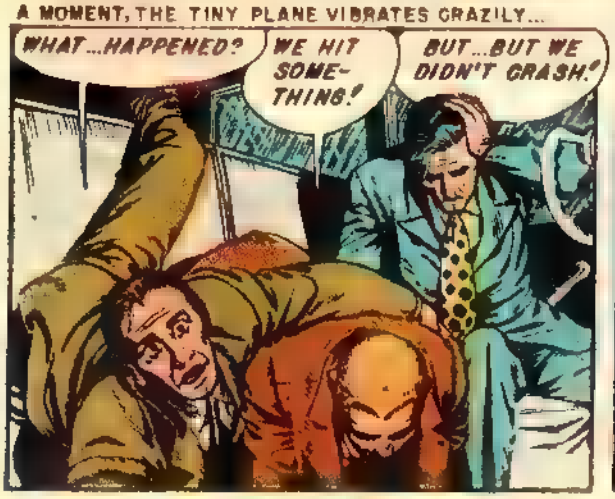


THE STORM LASHES AT THE AIR-PLANE, TOSSING IT LIKE A FEATHER...

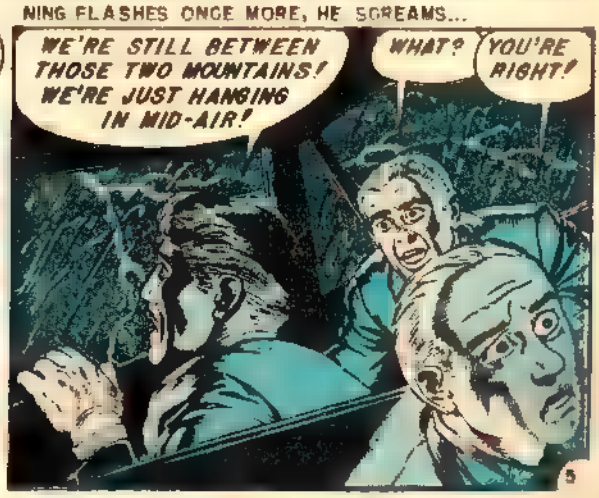
THE MOUNTAIN-TOP LOOMS UP BEFORE THE PLANE! WAGNER STRUGGLES WITH THE CONTROLS...

THE THREE MEN IN THE PLANE STRAIN THEIR EYES, TRYING TO PIERCE THE GATHERING GLOOM! SUDDENLY, AS A BOLT OF LIGHT-NING FLASHES...

THE SHOCK THROWS THE THREE MEN FORWARD! FOR A MOMENT, THE TINY PLANE VIBRATES GRAZILY...



WAGNER PEERS OUT OF THE WINDOW! AS THE LIGHT-NING FLASHES ONCE MORE, HE SCREAMS...



SOON, THE STORM SUBSIDES! ELLIS TAKES A FLASHLIGHT AND OPENS THE PLANE DOOR...

LOOK! THE PLANE IS CAUGHT ON THESE CABLES!

BE CAREFUL! YOU'LL FALL!

ELLIS CLIMBS FROM THE TINY CRAFT... ONTO THE CABLE-LIKE STRUCTURE...

IT'S SOME SORT OF A NETWORK! I'M GOING TO CLIMB DOWN!

NO, ELLIS! WAIT TILL DAYLIGHT! YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW HIGH UP WE ARE!

BUT ELLIS DOES NOT LISTEN! HE STARTS DOWN THE CABLE NETWORK! SOON, ONLY THE GLOW OF HIS FLASHLIGHT CAN BE SEEN...

ELLIS! COME BACK! YOU CRAZY FOOL!

SUDDENLY THE FLASHLIGHT-GLOW BLANKS OUT, AND THE NIGHT IS FILLED WITH A BLOOD-CURDLING SHRIEK OF HORROR...

YAAAHA-UK-!

ELLIS!

GOOD LORD!

FROM INSIDE THEIR PLANE, WAGNER AND BUCKLY STARE INTO THE DARKNESS...

WHAT... WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO HIM? HE... HE MUST HAVE FALLEN!

NO! HIS SCREAM DIDN'T FADE AWAY! IT WAS CUT SHORT! HE... HE SAW SOMETHING!

AS DAWN BREAKS OVER THE ANDES, WAGNER AND BUCKLY BEHOLD A STRANGE AND TERRIFYING SIGHT! THEIR TINY PLANE HANGS ENTWINED IN THE STRANGE CABLE-NETWORK, HALFWAY BETWEEN THE SHEER SIDES OF TWO MOUNTAINS AND HIGH OVER THE VALLEY FLOOR...

LOOK! WE CAN CLIMB TO SAFETY! IT REACHES THE MOUNTAIN SIDES.

WAIT, BUCKLY!

BUCKLY MOVES OUT OVER THE CABLE NETWORK! WAGNER HANGS BACK, A SENSATION OF TERROR CRAWLING DOWN HIS SPINE...

C'MON, WAGNER! YOU CAN'T STAY THERE TILL YOU STARVE!

I... I DON'T KNOW! I... I... OH, MY LORD...

THE GIGANTIC HAIRY THING DARTS DOWN THE NETWORK FROM BEYOND THE MOUNTAIN RIDGE! ITS EIGHT HUGE SPINY LEGS CARRY IT AT A BREATHTAKING SPEED! WAGNER SCREAMS...

BUCKLY! LOOK OUT! IT'S A GIANT SPIDER!

AAAAAAAAEEEE!

WAGNER SCAMPERS BACK INTO THE TRAPPED PLANE AND SLAMS THE DOOR! FROM A WINDOW HE WATCHES AS THE GIANT CRAWLING THING REACHES BUCKLY...

OH, LORD! IT...IT'S DEVOURING HIM!

BUCKLY'S HYSTERICAL SHRIEKS OF PAIN FINALLY SUBSIDE! THE HUGE SPIDER TURNS AND MOVES TOWARD THE PLANE...

NOW...NOW, IT...IT'S COMING TO GET ME!

THE GIANT SPIDER CROUCHES OVER THE TINY PLANE ...WAITING FOR ITS TERRIFIED OCCUPANT TO EMERGE! IT WAITS PATIENTLY...HOUR AFTER HOUR...

I...I'M TRAPPED! TRAPPED! IT'S JUST SITTING THERE... WAITING FOR ME...

BACK IN THE UNITED STATES, THE WARDEN AND THE DOCTOR STARE DOWN AT DONALD MORGAN! HE SITS IN THE CORNER OF HIS CELL... MUTTERING...

HE'S BEYOND HOPE, WARDEN! A COMPLETE MENTAL BREAKDOWN!

STIR CRAZY!

WHILE HIGH IN THE ANDES, MORGAN'S EX-BUSINESS ASSOCIATE IS SUFFERING THE SAME FATE! HE, TOO, IS OUT OF HIS MIND...

EH...EH...EH... SPIDER... EH... WAITING...EH... FOR...ME...EH...EH...

HEH, HEH! YEP! SO AFTER WAGNER, ELLIS AND BUCKLY TRAPPED MORGAN IN A WEB OF EVIDENCE, THEY WERE TRAPPED IN ONE THEMSELVES...A REAL WEB, THAT IS! I SUPPOSE YOU'RE WONDERING IF A SPIDER LIKE THAT REALLY EXISTS! WELL, NEXT TIME YOU SEE A LOCAL SPIDER, ASK IT IF IT EVER HEARD OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN MOUNTAIN CRAWLER! IT'LL PROBABLY CURL UP AND DIE AT THE MERE MENTION OF ITS NAME! 'BYE, NOW!

E.C. FANS!

UNDOUBTEDLY THE ZANIEST 10¢ WORTH OF IDIOTIC NONSENSE YOU COULD EVER HOPE TO BUY! TRY IT... JUST FOR LAUGHS!

ANOTHER "NEW TREND" SURE-FIRE WINNER!

ON SALE NOW AT ALL NEWSSTANDS!

Ramsey squeezed the trigger and felt the pistol buck violently in his hand. The young native guide in front of him spun around and crashed headlong into the heavy foliage.

"I don't need *him* any longer," Ramsey muttered as he slipped his gun back into its holster and stepped around the body sprawled beside the crude trail. "Now that he's revealed the hiding place of his peoples' treasure, I can go the rest of the way myself. As soon as I crack open the tomb where these superstitious, savages buried their loot, a fortune in diamonds and rubies is *mine!*"

3 hours later . . . 3 gruelling hours of incessant hacking through the matted underbrush . . . Ramsey staggered into a grassy clearing. Before him, rising grey and ominous as the guide had predicted, towered the mountain where the treasure of Molokko Island was hidden. A half-million dollars, intended as a sacrifice to primitive gods, was sealed up in those rocks!

The fatigue of the long trek from the coast . . . the painful lunging over razor-backed ridges and through evilly-sucking swamps . . . was forgotten by Ramsey in that moment of ecstasy. Here . . . somewhere along the base of this craggy mountain . . . was the secret entrance to a sacrificial chamber which housed a king's ransom!

The sun had begun fading when Ramsey found the cryptic designs carved into the stone. A *warning*, the

guide had whispered, that doom awaited anyone who dared invade the sanctity of the mountain! *The only one who's perished because of that fool curse,* Ramsey sneered, *was the guide, himself!*

In a few minutes he had jammed a dozen sticks of dynamite into fissures beside the sealed entrance. From a distance, protected by a huge boulder, Ramsey heard the shattering blast and saw tons of rock shower in every direction. When the dust had settled he raced toward the gaping hole now revealed in the mountain's side . . . even from this distance he could see the glimmer of precious stones within the tomb. It was all *his* . . .

A deep rumble made him stop in his tracks. The ground began to tremble wildly . . . far above the mountaintop was disintegrating before his eyes! Flames leaped madly toward the clouds . . . hissing black lava gushed torrentially down upon him . . .

Before Ramsey, in his terror, could flee across the grassy clearing, the searing liquid was upon him. Like fiery tar it bubbled around his legs, searing the tortured skin and tearing it loose in raw shreds. Pain stabbed instantly through his body, from head to toe . . . he felt stifling heat filling his agonized lungs, choking his breath in his throat.

The treasure . . . a thought flickered through his brain as he felt himself dissolving in that blanketing sea of molten lava . . . *buried in the side of a VOLCANIC MOUNTAIN! Dynamite . . . activated it . . .*

The scorching lava rolled on, and in its midst Ramsey's body turned molten hot . . . simmered and spit like meat broiled in a blast-furnace . . .

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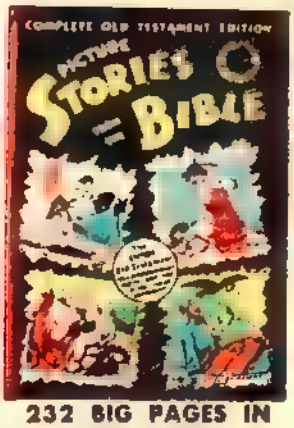

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THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

So, now you know! So maybe my two idiot editors won't be commandeering large portions of my column any more to make some ridiculous announcement about E.C.'s latest money-grabbing effort! A couple of pages back, you probably saw the cover of the first issue of the most recent addition to the E.C. trash heap! "MAD," they call it! You'd be MAD if you BOUGHT it! Of all the nauseating things, this new mag is actually FUNNY . . . choke! How disgusting can one get? When I reluctantly agreed to tie myself up with this miserable outfit, and allowed my Tales from the Crypt to be published in the form of comic magazines, I never in my goriest daymares dreamed that I would be in any way associated with funny-type magazines! Imagine a "comic" being COMIC! *(But C.K.! There's a HORROR story in "MAD"! —ed.)* Who tells it? Does V.K. tell it? Does O.W. tell it? DO I TELL IT? WHO TELLS IT? *(Harvey Kurtzman tells it! —ed.)* THERE! THAT'S WHAT I MEAN! What does that WAR MONGER know about HORROR? Where does POW, KA-BLAMM, WHOOSH Kurtzman come off writing horror stories? *(But this is different, C.K.! This is a FUNNY horror story! Why, we nearly died! —ed.)* NEARLY, eh? Drat the luck! And anyway, who ever heard of a FUNNY HORROR story? *(But C.K.! Your boy, Jack Davis, drew it! —ed.)* THERE! THAT'S WHAT I MEAN! What does . . . WHO? *(Jack Davis! —ed.)* JACK . . . sob . . . DAVIS? MY . . . sob . . . BOY? *(There, there, C.K.! No tears! —ed.)* How . . . how could he do this to me? *(Simple! We offered him MONEY! —ed.)* RUINING HIM . . . THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE DOING . . . RUINING HIM! DEAD BODIES AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH? PICKLED WEREWOLF KNUCKLES AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH? VAMPIRE GHOULASH (HUNGARIAN STYLE) ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH? You have to spoil him with MONEY? *(You do business your way . . . we'll do business our way! —ed.)* I QUIT! *(Now, now! The CONTRACT! Remember? —ed.)* Hmmmph! *(That's better! Now go on with your column! —ed.)* Ah, yes! The column! Well, let's look at some mail!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I suppose by now you've discovered the mistake you made in Tales from the Crypt No. 30, and have received hundreds of corrective letters. But in case you haven't, you said that the gold seekers sailed around the Cape of Good Hope which is in Africa, when you obviously meant Cape Horn in South America.

E. Kavanagh
N. Bergen, N.J.

. . . In your first story . . . I found a big mistake. It said, ". . . yeller-hungry critters'd taken clipper ships 'round the Cape o' Good Hope an' beaten us . . ." Of course, the fact that the Cape of Good Hope is in Africa shouldn't matter much, except that they would have landed in India. Most of them didn't go around Cape Horn anyway! They went to the Isthmus of Panama, crossed on foot to the other side, and got a boat which was waiting for them.

James Slayden
Yonkers, N.Y.

. . . In "Ghastly Prospects" you wrote that the gold seekers went around the Cape of Good Hope. This hardly seems possible since said cape is at the southern tip of Africa. Was this a misprint or a geographical error?

David A.V. Vanderah
Dubuque, Iowa

All right, already! So I made a mistake! So wadda ya want? I should know geography? Besides, my idiot editors should have caught the mistake! *(So WE should know geography? —ed.) (I know geography! —Harvey Kurtzman)* WAR MONGER!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Probably you didn't think your horror stories reached their long tentacles across the Atlantic to scare characters like me over here in England. May I take this opportunity to say that yours are the best horror and terror stories I've ever read. Let's hope that your little ambassadors of horror (your magazines) keep managing to crawl their ghastly way over here, if only to keep me screaming.

Alan Cresswell
London, England

Blimey! 'E's orff 'is bloody rocker, by Jove, and all that sort of rot! It's been bully 'earing from you, Al, old boy!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Your stories are the most revolting, the most repulsive, the most disgusting stories I have ever read. When I read your magazine, I get sick to my stomach. I'm not alone in this opinion. All my friends think the same thing. Keep up the good work.

Marvin Gilbert
Westport, Conn.

My friends think so too, Marv!

Dear C.K.,

I would be most pleased if you would send me the set of photographs. I've decided to end it all, and that's the quickest way I know. Enclosed is the fearful fee required. Gratefully . . .

Robert Hammersley
San Francisco, Cal.

For any of you other grateful ingrates who are looking for a way out, be advised that five by seven autographed photographic reproductions of V.K., O.W., and myself are still available . . . and will be for some time! So there's no rush! Mail your quarter in anytime! Few battered copies of Tales of Terror kicking around too. Likewise two bits! Subscriptions . . . full year . . . six issues . . . six bits . . . 75¢ in coin of the realm to you unhep heaps! Send complaints, compliments, picture orders, T. of T. orders, subscription orders, and short orders (make mine on rye!) to:

The Crypt-Keeper
Room 706, Dept. 32
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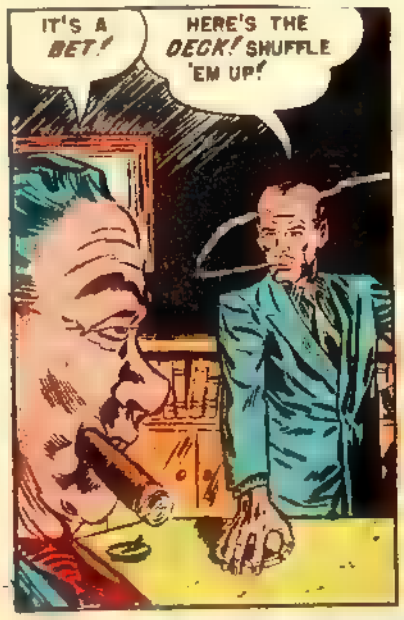
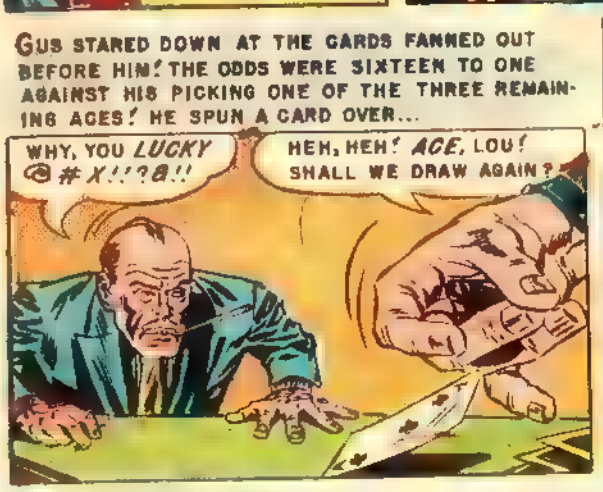
READ OF THE STARK HORROR TWO MEN FOUND IN A GAME OF CUTTING CARDS!

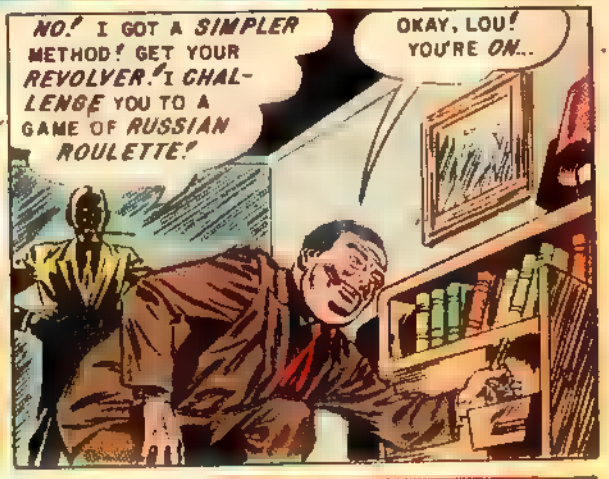
THIS STORY IS PROBABLY THE MOST *HORRIBLE, BLOOD-CURDLING* TALE YOU WILL *EVER* READ! IT CONCERNS *TWO PROFESSIONAL GAMBLERS... GUS FORNEY* AND *LOU CREBIS!* GAMBLERS...*BIG-TIME* GAMBLERS LIKE GUS AND LOU...ARE IN A CLASS BY THEMSELVES! GAMBLING IS THEIR *LIFE!* THE WAGER... THE BET...IS THEIR *BLOOD!* BUT GUS FORNEY AND LOU CREBIS *HATED* EACH OTHER...HATED EACH OTHER *LIKE POISON*...


IT'S A BET!
HERE'S THE DECK! SHUFFLE 'EM UP!

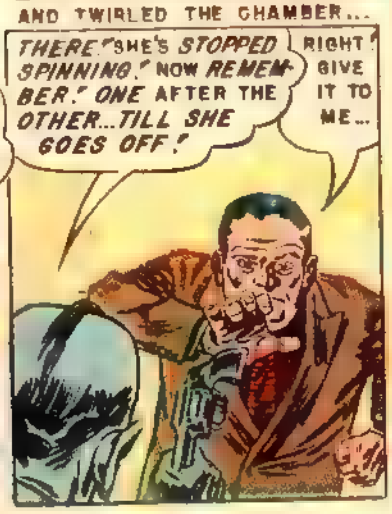
GUS SHUFFLED THE CARDS AND SPREAD THEM OUT, FACE DOWN, ON THE TABLE...
GO AHEAD! PICK!
OKAY! I'LL PICK...ER...

LOU FINGERED THE FACE DOWN CARDS, RUNNING THROUGH THEM! THEN... HE SPUN ONE OVER...
ACE! TOO BAD, GUS!
WAIT A MINUTE! I STILL DRAW! THERE ARE THREE ACES LEFT IN THAT DECK!


GUS STARED DOWN AT THE CARDS FANNED OUT BEFORE HIM! THE ODDS WERE SIXTEEN TO ONE AGAINST HIS PICKING ONE OF THE THREE REMAINING ACES! HE SPUN A CARD OVER...
WHY, YOU LUCKY @#X!!?8!!
HEH, HEH! ACE, LOU! SHALL WE DRAW AGAIN?


NO! I GOT A SIMPLER METHOD! GET YOUR REVOLVER! I CHALLENGE YOU TO A GAME OF RUSSIAN ROULETTE!
OKAY, LOU! YOU'RE ON...

GUS TOOK HIS REVOLVER FROM THE DRAWER AND REMOVED ALL BUT ONE BULLET FROM ITS SIX CHAMBERS...
WE GO IN SEQUENCE... ALTERNATING! I'LL GO FIRST!
OKAY WITH ME, GUS! I'LL SPIN THE CHAMBER!


LOU TOOK THE SIX-SHOT REVOLVER AND TWIRLED THE CHAMBER...
THERE! SHE'S STOPPED SPINNING! NOW REMEMBER! ONE AFTER THE OTHER... TILL SHE GOES OFF!
RIGHT! GIVE IT TO ME...

GUS TOOK THE REVOLVER! HE LIFTED THE BARREL TO HIS TEMPLE! THE ODDS WERE FIVE TO ONE...

CLICK!

GUS HANDED THE GUN TO LOU! LOU PLACED THE MUZZLE AGAINST HIS HEAD! ODDS NOW... *FOUR* TO ONE...

CLICK!

GUS TOOK THE GUN! BEADS OF PERSPIRATION BEGAN TO POP OUT ON THE TWO GAMBLERS' FACES! GUS POINTED THE REVOLVER! ODDS... *THREE* TO ONE...

CLICK!

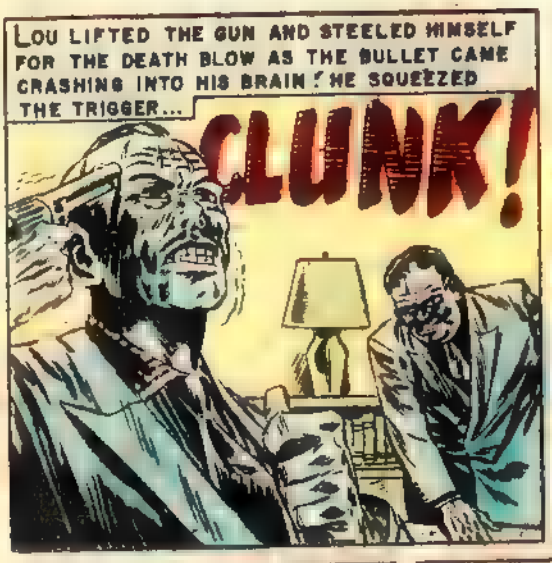
LOU TOOK THE GUN! THERE WERE *THREE SHOTS LEFT NOW!* *ONE* OF THEM HAD THAT *BULLET!* ODDS... *TWO* TO ONE...

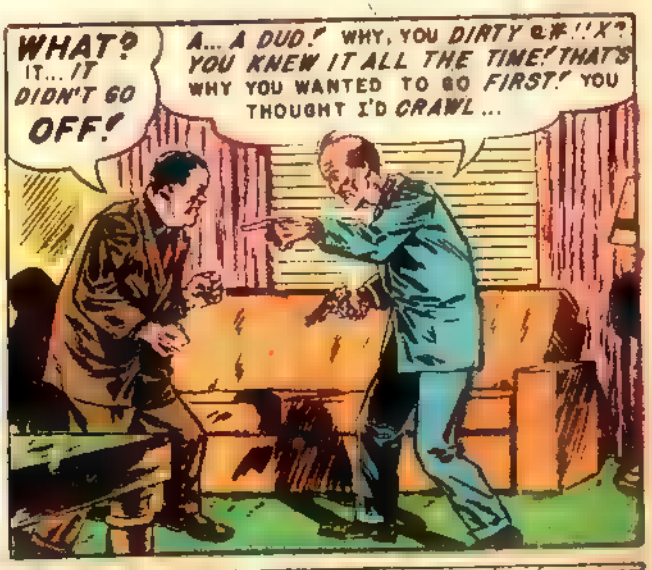
CLICK!

LOU SIGHED IN RELIEF AND MOPPED HIS BROW! GUS'S HAND SHOOK A LITTLE AS HE RAISED THE GUN! HE HESITATED! IT WAS EVEN MONEY, NOW! HIS FINGER TWITCHED... THEN CLOSED...

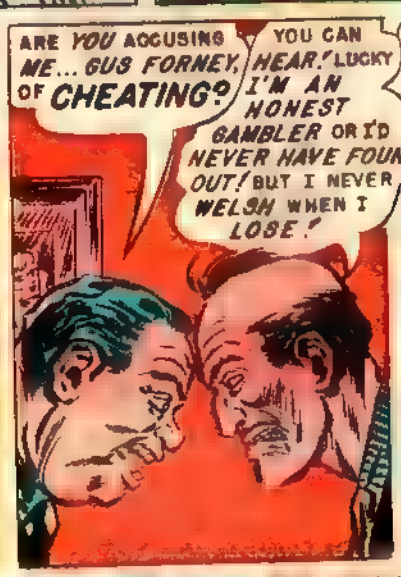
CLICK!

GUS GRINNED! LOU STARED AT THE GUN! THE ODDS HAD RUN OUT! THE BULLET WAS LEFT! GUS HANDED THE WEAPON OVER...
HEH, HEH! TOO BAD, LOU!
CHOKE!


LOU LIFTED THE GUN AND STEELED HIMSELF FOR THE DEATH BLOW AS THE BULLET CAME CRASHING INTO HIS BRAIN! HE SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER...
CLUNK!


WHAT? IT... IT DIDN'T GO OFF!
A... A DUD! WHY, YOU DIRTY @#!!X? YOU KNEW IT ALL THE TIME! THAT'S WHY YOU WANTED TO GO FIRST! YOU THOUGHT I'D CRAWL...

DON'T BE AN IDIOT, LOU! YOU TWIRLED THE CHAMBER! HOW DID I KNOW IT WOULD COME UP LAST?
YOU CAN'T TALK YOUR WAY OUT OF THIS ONE, GUS! NO MATTER WHEN IT CAME UP, YOU HAD A SURE THING!


ARE YOU ACCUSING ME... GUS FORNEY, OF CHEATING?
YOU CAN HEAR! LUCKY I'M AN HONEST GAMBLER OR I'D NEVER HAVE FOUND OUT! BUT I NEVER WELSH WHEN I LOSE!

OKAY, CREBIS! IF YOU'RE SUCH A BIG-SHOT GAMBLER... THEN YOU'LL ACCEPT MY CHALLENGE!
YOU JUST NAME IT!

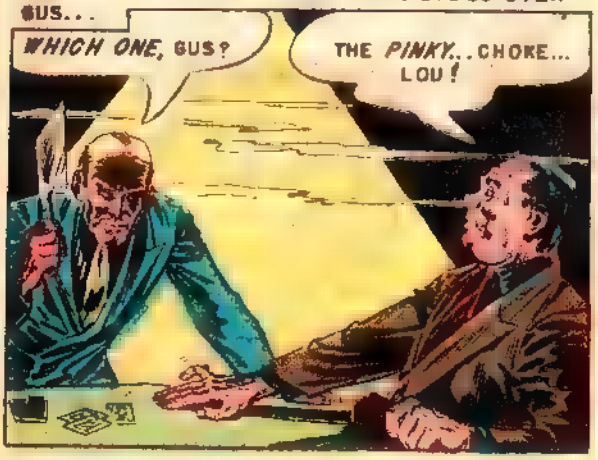
NOBODY CALLS GUS FORNEY A CHEAT! CREBIS... I CHALLENGE YOU TO A GAME OF CHOP-POKER!
OKAY, YOU GRUM! YOU'RE ON!

TO A FINISH!
TO A FINISH! CALL YOUR DOCTOR! I'LL GET MINE!

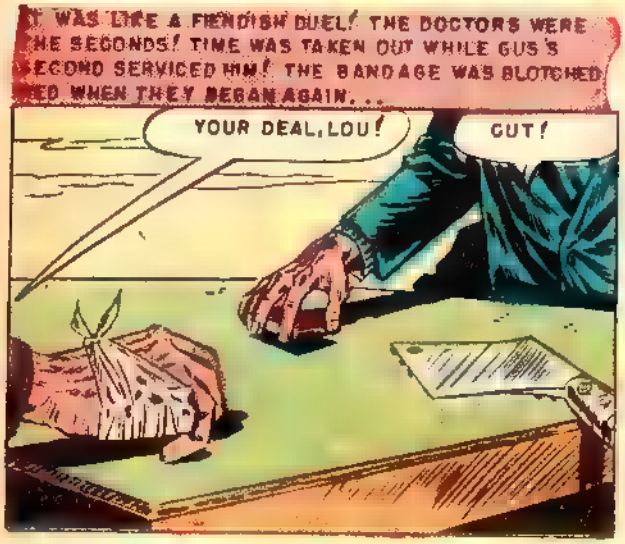
THEN, FIENDS BEGAN THE MOST HORRIBLE CARD GAME IN THE HISTORY OF MODERN GAMBLING! YOU'VE HEARD OF STRIP POKER? WELL, CHOP POKER IS ALMOST LIKE THAT! ONLY INSTEAD OF LOSING AN ARTICLE OF CLOTHING ...YOU LOSE A LIMB! CHOP POKER HAD BEEN PLAYED BEFORE...IT WAS TOLD...BUT ONLY ONE HAND AT A TIME! NEVER...TO A FINISH!

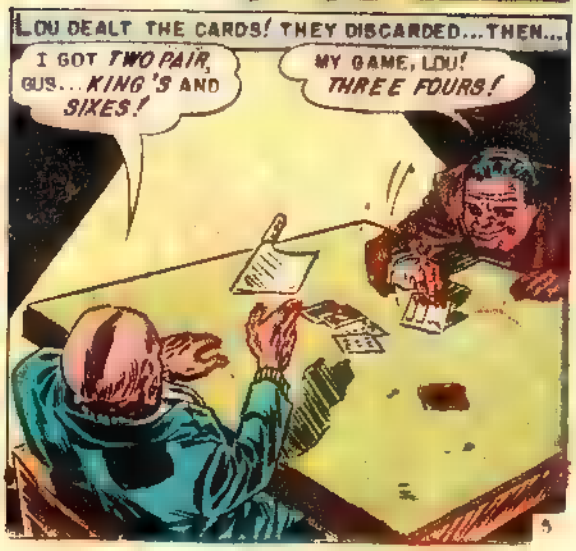
THEY SAT AT THE GREEN FELT-COVERED TABLE BENEATH THE GLARING LAMP! THE MEAT CLEAVER SPARKLED BETWEEN THEM! GUS DEALT THE CARDS...
I'LL TAKE TWO!
I'LL TAKE THREE!

I GOT THREE TENS, LOU!
SORRY, GUS! THREE LADIES!


LOU PICKED UP THE CLEAVER AND STOOD OVER GUS...
WHICH ONE, GUS?
THE PINKY...CHOKE... LOU!

GUS STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND! HIS PERSONAL DOCTOR MOVED FORWARD INTO THE LIGHT! LOU RAISED THE CLEAVER AND BROUGHT IT DOWN...
AAAAARRRRGHHH!
ZOK!


IT WAS LIKE A FIENDISH DUEL! THE DOCTORS WERE THE SECONDS! TIME WAS TAKEN OUT WHILE GUS'S SECOND SERVICED HIM! THE BANDAGE WAS BLOTCHED RED WHEN THEY BEGAN AGAIN...
YOUR DEAL, LOU!
CUT!


LOU DEALT THE CARDS! THEY DISCARDED...THEN...
I GOT TWO PAIR, GUS...KING'S AND SIXES!
MY GAME, LOU! THREE FOURS!

GUS PICKED UP THE CLEAVER IN HIS GOOD HAND! LOU'S SECOND MOVED INTO THE LAMPLIGHT...

WHICH ONE, LOU?

THE...THE *PINKY*...GUS!

LOU STRETCHED OUT HIS LEFT HAND! GUS TOOK CAREFUL AIM...

UUUUNNGHHHH!

THUK

AGAIN TIME WAS TAKEN OUT WHILE LOU'S SECOND SERVICED HIM! SOON, THE CARDS WERE SHUFFLED ONCE MORE...

LET'S *GO*, GUS! YOU DEAL!

CUT, IM, LOU!

HEH, HEH! YEP, KIDDIES! THAT'S HOW THE GAME WAS PLAYED! IT CONTINUED *ON* LIKE THAT... *FAR INTO THE NIGHT!* AS EACH HAND WAS PLAYED AND WON...

OOOOOWWWWW!

ZUNG

BUT LOU AND GUS NEVER *DID* PLAY *CHOP POKER* TO A *FINISH!* OH, YES! THEY PLAYED ALL NIGHT AND INTO THE NEXT DAY! BUT THEY HAD TO QUIT TOWARDS EVENING! SEEMS THAT *NEITHER OF THEM COULD DEAL THE CARDS!*

WHAT? YOU DON'T *BELIEVE* ME! WELL, LET'S LOOK IN ON THIS *HOSPITAL* ROOM! *LOU* AND *GUS* ARE IN THERE... *STILL GAMBLING*...

GO AHEAD! IT'S *YOUR MOVE!*

SO PASS THE CHEWING GUM! I WANT TO JUMP YOU!

THE END

THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

PEANUTS, POPCORN... HEE, HEE! YEP, IT'S YOUR *FEEDER OF FOUL FABLES*... *THE OLD WITCH*... *COOKIN'* AGAIN! GOT A *CIRCUS* RECIPE FOR YOU THIS TIME! *ELEPHANT STEAK* GARNISHED WITH *CRUSHED TAN-BARK!* I GOT THE IDEA FROM THE *STORY* I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU! I *CALL* THIS *GARBLED GRABBING OF GORE*...

SQUASH... ANYONE?

FOR A MOMENT, THE CROWD UNDER THE BIG-TOP SAT DEATHLY SILENT! THEN, FROM THE BANDSTAND, A DRUM BEGAN TO ROLL... ITS OMINOUS STACCATO OF ANTICIPATION GROWING LOUDER AND LOUDER! IN THE CENTER OF THE RING, THE HUGE ELEPHANT LIFTED A MASSIVE FORELEG! THE SCANTILY CLAD WOMAN RECLINED ON THE TANBARK FLOOR! THE ELEPHANT TRAINER BARKED ORDERS! THE RING-MASTER ANNOUNCED...

AND *NOW*, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... FOR THE *MOST DEATH-DEFYING FEAT EVER PRESENTED UNDER THE BIG-TOP*...

THE WOMAN WRIGGLED UNDER THE MAMMOTH UPRAISED FOOT OF THE ELEPHANT! THE TRAINER SHOUTED ABOVE THE DRUM-ROLL'S RISING CRESCENDO! THE ELEPHANT TRUMPETED... CURLING ITS TRUNK...
EIGHT THOUSAND POUNDS... LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! ONE SLIP... AND IT MEANS CERTAIN DEATH! WATCH...
THE GIRL STARED UP AT THE HUGE HOOF! IT WAS DIRECTLY OVER HER FACE! THE TRAINER BARKED AN ORDER! THE GOLIATH LOWERED ITS UPRAISED FORELEG! THE DRUM-ROLL THUNDERED...
THE ELEPHANT HOOF TOUCHED THE WOMAN'S NOSE! A CYMBAL CRASHED...
THE TRAINER AND THE GIRL BOWED AGAIN AND AGAIN! THE CROWD CHEERED...
THE ELEPHANT ACT WAS OVER! THE CIRCUS BAND STRUCK UP A HAPPY MARCH, AND THE CLOWNS SWEPT OUT ACROSS THE ARENA! THE TRAINER AND THE GIRL DISAPPEARED THROUGH THE EXIT-WAY...
EMMA WAS GOOD TONIGHT, MILO! HER FOOT WAS STEADY!
I HAVE TRAINED HER WELL, RENÉ! DIDN'T YOU THINK THEY APPLAUDED MORE THAN USUAL, TONIGHT?
THE COUPLE MOVED ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS TO A TRAILER! THE LETTERS PAINTED UPON IT WERE BIG AND IMPRESSIVE! 'MILO... WORLD'S GREATEST ELEPHANT TRAINER!'
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO RIDE INTO TOWN TONIGHT, MILO?
NOT TONIGHT, RENÉ! I'M TIRED...
ELEF
THE INSIDE OF THE TRAILER WAS CROWDED AND MESSY! COLORFUL COSTUMES LAY STREWN ABOUT! BOOKS AND MAGAZINES SPRAWLED ON EVERY AVAILABLE SURFACE...
NOT TONIGHT! NOT TONIGHT! THAT'S ALL I HEAR! WELL, I'M NOT STAYING AROUND NIGHT AFTER NIGHT... NOT IN THIS DUMP!
I'M NOT STOPPING YOU FROM GOING INTO TOWN, RENÉ!
2

THE WOMAN SLIPPED OUT OF HER SCANTY COSTUME AND INTO A STREET-DRESS...

A *HECK* OF A MARRIAGE *OURS* IS! I MIGHT AS WELL BE MARRIED TO YOUR *ELEPHANT!*

THEN *DIVORCE* ME, RENÉ!

OH, *NO!* NOT *THAT EASY*, BIG BOY! YOU'RE *STUCK* WITH ME! I'D *NEVER* GIVE YOU A *DIVORCE* WITHOUT A *FIGHT!* IT'D COST YOU *PLENTY...*

OKAY, RENÉ! *OKAY!* WE'VE BEEN ALL THROUGH THIS *BEFORE!*

RENÉ SLAMMED THE DOOR OF THE TRAILER IN ANGER AS SHE LEFT! FROM BEYOND, IN THE SHADOWS, A FIGURE WATCHED HER ENTER THE CAR...

AS SOON AS RENÉ'D DRIVEN OFF, THE FIGURE MOVED OUT OF THE SHADOWS! IT WAS A *WOMAN!* SHE DARTED TOWARD MILO'S TRAILER...

LEETA! DARLING...

OH, MILO..!

THEY CLUNG TO EACH OTHER FOR A FEW MOMENTS! THEN...

DID YOU *TELL* HER? ABOUT *US!*

NO! IT'S *NO USE!* SHE'D *NEVER* GIVE ME A *DIVORCE!* I *KNOW!* WE'LL HAVE TO *RUN AWAY...*

LEETA LOOKED AT MILO! A FLASH OF EVIL GLISTENED IN HER TEMPESTUOUS EYES...

WHAT...WHAT IF THERE WERE A *TERRIBLE ACCIDENT?* WHAT IF RENÉ WERE *KILLED?*

LEETA! WHAT ARE YOU *SAYING?*

EMMA COULD *SLIP*, MY DARLING! DON'T YOU SEE HOW *EASY* IT COULD BE?

NO! EMMA WOULD NOT SLIP! SHE'S *WELL TRAINED!* SHE WOULD *NOT* PUT HER FOOT *DOWN* UNTIL I *SIGNALED* HER...

AND IF YOU DID SIGNAL HER?
IT... IT WOULD BE MURDER, LEETA!
EXACTLY, MY DARLING! AND NO ONE WOULD EVER KNOW! YOU COULD ACT SHOCKED... BLAME IT ON EMMA... CLAIM THAT SHE DISOBEYED YOU...
I'D HAVE TO HAVE HER SHOT!
YOU COULD TRAIN ANOTHER, MY DARLING! NEW WIFE... NEW ELEPHANT... A WHOLE NEW LIFE FOR YOU...
I... I DON'T KNOW! I JUST DON'T KNOW...
LEETA'S EYES BURNED! HER FACE DARKENED...
IT'S THAT... OR ME, MILO! I'M NOT CUT OUT FOR THIS... THIS SECRET-MEETING NONSENSE! I WANT YOU... ALL THE TIME... OR NOT AT ALL!
GIVE ME A CHANCE TO THINK IT OVER, LEETA! PLEASE!
LEETA SMILED! SHE PURSED HER LIPS... RUNNING HER HAND THROUGH MILO'S HAIR...
OF COURSE, MY DARLING! TILL TOMORROW NIGHT'S PERFORMANCE! IF IT DOESN'T HAPPEN THEN...
LEETA! BABY...
THE NEXT EVENING, MILO AND RENÉ STOOD IN THE ENTRANCE-WAY TO THE BIG-TOP, AWAITING THEIR CUE-MUSIC! EMMA TRUMPETED SOFTLY! SHE SEEMED TO SENSE THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG...
THERE, THERE, GIRL! EMMA SEEMS NERVOUS TONIGHT, MILO!
SHE'S ALL RIGHT... C'MON! THERE'S OUR CUE!
THE FANFARE SILENCED THE CROWD! THE RING-MASTER INTRODUCED THE ACT AS THE SPOT-LIGHT SWUNG TO THE BOWING PERFORMERS...
AND NOW... MILO... THE GREATEST ELEPHANT TRAINER IN THE WORLD... AND HIS WONDER-ELEPHANT, EMMA... ASSISTED BY THAT DEATH-DEFYING BEAUTY... RENÉ...

THE DRUM BEGAN ITS ANXIOUS ROLL ONCE MORE! MILO BARKED AN ORDER AND EMMA LIFTED HER FOOT! RENÉ GOT DOWN ON THE RING-FLOOR AND WRIGGLED BELOW IT...
THE THUNDER OF THE ROLLING DRUM GREW LOUDER AND LOUDER! EMMA'S HOOF HUNG MENACINGLY ABOVE RENÉ'S WHITE FACE! MILO BARKED AN ORDER AND THE HUGE FOOT LOWERED SLOWLY...
FOR A MOMENT, EMMA'S GIGANTIC HOOF TOUCHED RENÉ'S WHITE FACE! THE DRUM ROLL REACHED ITS CRESCENDO...
AS THE CYMBOL CRASHED, MILO SHOUTED AT EMMA! RENÉ SCREAMED!
EEEEEEEAAAAAA...
THE SCREAM CAME TOO LATE! EMMA WAS WELL-TRAINED AND RESPONDED IMMEDIATELY! MILO WATCHED IN HORROR AS EIGHT THOUSAND POUNDS DESCENDED ON RENÉ'S FEAR-TWISTED FACE...
LOOK OUT!
GOOD LORD!
EMMA TRUMPETED SHRILLY! SHE REARED UP...SNORTING! FOR A MOMENT, THE STUNNED AUDIENCE WAS SHOCKED BY THE GORY SIGHT! THEN SOMEONE SHRIEKED...! PANDEMONIUM BROKE LOOSE! MILO HOLLERED HORSELY
SOMEBODY DO SOMETHING! EMMA'S GONE MAD!
TWO GUARDS RUSHED FORWARD! THEY FIRED AT THE RED-EYED PACHYDERM...EMPTYING THEIR GUNS INTO HER TOUGH HIDE! THE CROWD SCREAMED AND SHOUTED AS IT BROKE FOR THE EXITS...
5

EMMA SWAYED AND TOPPLED OVER ON HER SIDE... *DEAD!* THE CIRCUS BAND BLARED IN DISCORD, ATTEMPTING TO RESTORE ORDER! THE RING-MASTER RUSHED TO MILO AS HE STARED DOWN AT RENÉ'S CRUSHED REMAINS IN UTTER REVULSION...

DON'T... DON'T *LOOK* AT HER, MILO! IT... IT'S *HORRIBLE!*

RENÉ! SOB... *RENÉ!*

THEY LED MILO TO THE EXIT-WAY! HE WAS SOBBING SOFTLY! BUT THAT NIGHT... FAR FROM THE CIRCUS GROUNDS... HE AND LEETA LAUGHED TOGETHER...

IT WAS SO *SIMPLE*, DARLING! SO *SIMPLE!*

I *TOLD* YOU, MILO! I *TOLD* YOU IT WOULD BE!

MILO WAS FREE NOW... FREE OF RENÉ FOREVER! HE AND LEETA MADE PLANS...

WE'LL *WAIT* A FEW MONTHS... JUST TO MAKE IT *LOOK GOOD*... AND THEN WE'LL BE *MARRIED!*

AND *I'LL* BEGIN TRAINING *ANOTHER ELEPHANT!*

FROM *NOW ON*, IT'S *SMOOTH SAILING* FOR US, MILO!

C'MERE, BABY!

IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR MILO TO TRAIN A NEW ELEPHANT TO TAKE EMMA'S PLACE! WITHIN A YEAR THE ACT WAS AGAIN THRILLING AUDIENCES...

... *MILO*... WITH HIS *WONDER-ELEPHANT, BESSIE*... ASSISTED BY THAT *DEATH-DEFYING BEAUTY... LEETA!*

THE CIRCUS RETURNED TO THE TOWN WHERE THE HORRIBLE 'ACCIDENT' HAD HAPPENED ONE YEAR PREVIOUSLY! THE NIGHT OF THE OPENING PERFORMANCE, MILO AND LEETA STOOD BESIDE BESSIE, AWAITING THEIR CUE...

I'LL BE GLAD WHEN *THIS* WEEK IS OVER AND WE *LEAVE* THIS BERG! *RENÉ* IS *BURIED* HERE! AND *EMMA*...

DON'T *THINK* ABOUT IT, DARLING!

THE CUE FANFARE BLARED! THE SPOT-LIGHT SWUNG TO THE ENTRANCE-WAY TO PICK THEM UP! A DISTANT SHRILL TRUMPETING SOUNDED...

STEADY, BESSIE, BABY!

GASP! THAT WASN'T *BESSIE*, MILO! I... I...

THE LOW RUMBLING THAT ECHOED INTO THE NIGHT DID NOT COME FROM THE BAND-STAND! A CLOWN DARTED ACROSS THE ARENA...SCREAMING...

I *SAW* THEM... I *SAW* THEM!

MILO! WHAT *IS* IT?

IT BURST THROUGH THE EXIT-WAY ACROSS THE TANBARK FLOOR! IT TRUMPETED SHRILLY! THE STENCH FILLED THE BIG-TOP! ITS ROTTING HIDE FELL AWAY IN SLIMY CLODS AS IT MOVED! HERE AND THERE, WHITENED BONES PROTRUDED THROUGH ITS MAGGOT-COVERED FLESH! PERCHED ON THE REMAINS OF ITS HEAD SAT THE DECAYED FIGURE OF A WOMAN, URGING IT ON...

EMMA...AND RENÉ!

IT LUMBERED TOWARD THE HORRIFIED TRAINER AND HIS NEW WIFE... THE THING ON ITS HEAD POINTING WILDLY...

IT WAS TOO LATE FOR MILO TO MOVE... TOO LATE TO RUN! THE THING WAS UPON HIM... LIFTING HIM IN ITS FOUL-SMELLING, DECOMPOSING TRUNK! LEETA WAS CAUGHT BENEATH ONE OF ITS HUGE ROTTED HOOFS...

EEEEEEEEEE...

AAAAAAAAA...

MILO WAS *FLUNG* TO THE *TAN-BARK* WITH THE *FORCE* OF A *TWENTY-STORY FALL!* LEETA WAS *CRUSHED FLAT*...

THEN, AS THE SCREAMS SUB-SIDED AND DEATH CAME TO MILO AND LEETA, THE HUGE THING AND THE HUMAN-THING UPON IT SEEMED TO JUST FALL AWAY INTO A PILE OF PUTRESCENT SLIME...

PEANUTS... POPCORN... PUTRES-CENT SLIME! HEY, *LADY! BUY* YER BRAT A BAG OF *PUTRES-CENT SLIME!* HEE, HEE! YEP! THAT'S M'TALE, KIDDIES! RENÉ AND EMMA GOT THEIR *REVENGE*, AND MILO AND LEETA GOT *THEIRS, TOO!* BY THE WAY! I'M SELLING *COTTON-CANDY!* GOT A WHOLE *TRUNK-FUL!* HEE, HEE! WHAT *ROTTEN-TASTING STUFF!* 'BYE, NOW! WE'LL *ALL* SEE YOU *NEXT* IN THE VAULT-KEEPER'S MAG, *THE VAULT OF HORROR!*

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SPECIAL OFFER

If bought in the store, the JETEX #50 engine alone would cost $1.95; the JETEX JAVELIN, $.75; a total cost of $2.70.

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Includes fuel supply.

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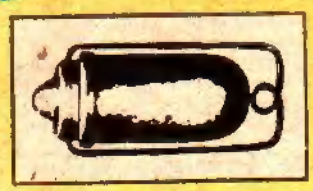

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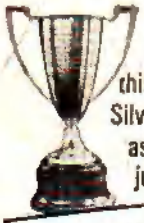

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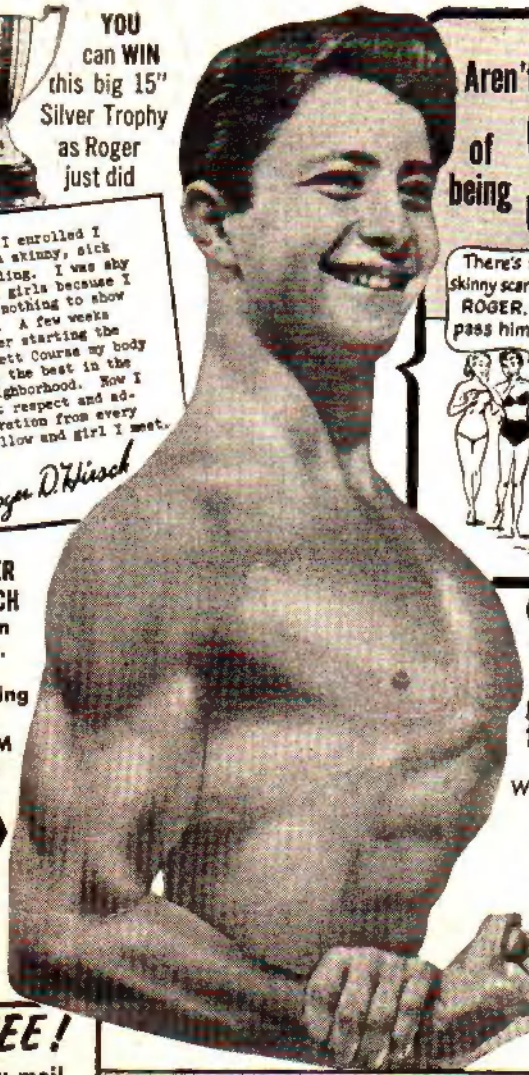
ROGER HIRSCH was an 112 lb. 6 ft. weakling **LOOK AT HIM NOW!**



Aren't YOU as SICK and Tired as I was of being SKINNY?

CHICKEN-CHESTED
SPINDLE-ARMED
NARROW-SHOULDERED
SHORT-WINDED
WEAK, HALF-ALIVE
JEERED, BULLIED

Then do as I did...
MAIL THE COUPON BELOW

I gained 53 lbs. of mighty muscle
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Come on, PAL, Now **YOU** give me **10** pleasant Minutes a Day in your own home . . . and I'll give **YOU** a **NEW HE-MAN BODY** for your **OLD SKELETON FRAME.**

says GEORGE F. JOWETT
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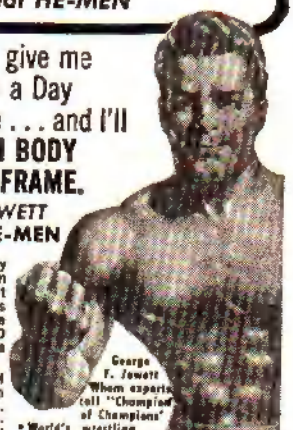
NO! I don't care how skinny or flabby you are; if you're a teen-ager, in your 20's or 30's or over; if you're short or tall, or what work you do. All I want is JUST 10 EXCITING MINUTES in your home to MAKE YOU OVER by the SAME METHOD I turned myself from a wreck to a Champion of Champions.

YES! You'll see INCH upon INCH of MIGHTY MUSCLE added to YOUR ARMS. Your CHEST deepened. Your BACK AND SHOULDERS broadened. From head to heels, you'll gain SOLIDITY, SIZE, POWER, SPEED! You'll become an ALL-Around, ALL-American HE-MAN, a WINNER in everything you tackle—or my Training won't cost you one solitary cent!



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Develop YOUR 520 MUSCLES Gain Pounds, INCHES, FAST!

Friend, I've traveled the world. Made a LIFETIME STUDY of every way known to develop your body. Then I devised the BEST by TEST, my "5-WAY PROGRESSIVE POWER" the only method that builds you 5-ways fast. You save YEARS, DOLLARS like movie star Tom Tyler did. Like Champ Roger Hirsch did. Like MANY THOUSANDS like you did. SO . . .

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